

## **SCHOOL SITE IMPROVEMENTS FOR SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS**

# **IR A-9**

Reference: Education Code Section 17283

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Supercedes IR M-6 (9/99)

This interpretation is intended for use by the plan review and field engineers of DSA to indicate an acceptable method for achieving compliance with applicable codes and regulations. Its purpose is to promote more uniform statewide criteria for use in plan review and supervision of construction of public schools, community colleges and essential services buildings. Other methods proposed by design professionals to solve a particular problem may be considered by DSA and reviewed for code and regulation compliance.

**Purpose:** This IR outlines the Division of the State Architect (DSA) policy regarding site improvements for school building projects.

**1. Site Work Not Involving Structures or Their Utilities.** For school site improvement projects that involve only grading, landscaping, fill placement, paving, storm drains or other work that does not support structures or involve their utilities, the school board is not required to file an application for DSA approval. School districts have the option to file for DSA approval if they choose to do so. This policy is based upon definition of "school building" in Section 17283 of the Education Code. DSA access compliance approval is required for all new and existing construction.

In any case, the district is subject to compliance with local, city or county ordinances as required by law, other than the Education Code (e.g. local ordinances governing drainage, waste, fire protection, the health and safety code, the government code, etc.). It is the school district's responsibility to identify and comply with all such applicable statutes and regulations.

**2. Existing Site Work with Engineered Fill Involving New School Buildings and Their Utilities.** For projects involving school buildings and their utilities erected on an existing site with previously placed engineered fill, the architect shall show "existing fill" on his plans. Adequate data concerning the existing fill is required. The site soil investigation, compacted fill requirements, inspection and testing records of the original fill placement which has been verified by a geotechnical engineer's affidavit shall be provided. If this documentation is not available or adequate, an investigation of the existing fill shall be made by a geotechnical engineer who shall prepare a report making recommendations regarding fill adequacy and allowable soil bearing pressures for the footings of the proposed buildings. This report shall be submitted to DSA with the plans and specifications for the project.

**3. Site Work Involving New School Buildings or Site Utilities.** All site improvement plans and specifications involving engineered fill designed to support structures or involving retaining walls, underground structures, utility systems or other items as required shall be submitted to DSA for approval prior to start of construction.

Options for submitting school building project plans and specifications for site improvement are as follows:

Option A - Single Application. The entire project may be submitted for approval at one time under a single application, or site improvements may be listed as phase I of a multi-phase project submitted under a single application. The plan review fee for either of the above shall be based on the estimated cost of construction of the entire project. If the Site improvements are submitted as phase I of the project the remainder of the project may be submitted under one or more subsequent phases under the same application.

Option B - Multiple Applications. Plans and specifications for site improvement work may be submitted under one application, and the school buildings for this site may be submitted under another application. The estimated cost and plan check fees for each application shall be based on the scope of work designated to each application. This option is intended for special circumstances and requires pre-approval by DSA.

**4. Engineered Fill.** In all cases the geotechnical engineer making the investigation of the engineered fill and certifying to its adequacy for supporting school buildings is to be employed by the school district. The geotechnical engineer is prohibited from having an employment relationship with the contractor or developer for the existing site work during the placement of the fill material.